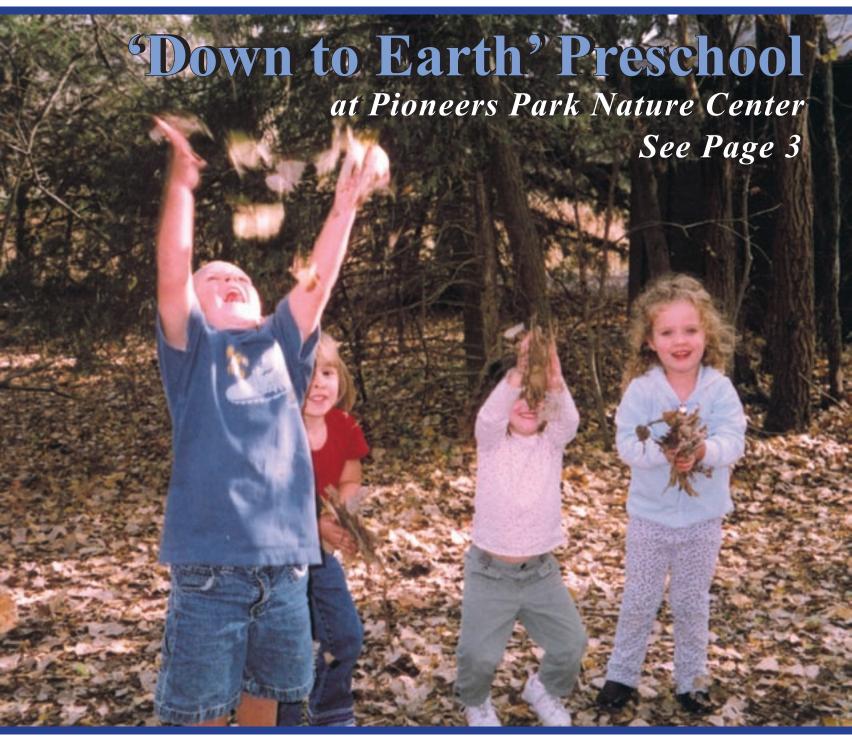
LINCOLN PARKS AND RECREATION

City CMIVIPASS

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IT'S AN ALL NEW Lincoln Parks and Recreation

City COMPASS

rks A Guide to Recreation in Lincoln

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on programming and working with children &

youth. Your chance to be creative and work with

a team of members who

want to make a difference!

Americorps/VISTA

Need You

Lincoln Parks and Recreation is looking for applicants for the AmeriCorps and Vista Program.

- Monthly Living Allowance
- Education Award
- Health Insurance
- Deferment of Student Loans
- Childcare Allowance For Qualified



For Information and Application Materials Contact:

441-4907, dbuckman@lincoln.ne.gov or 441-4900, kburklun@lincoln.ne.gov

About The Cover: Nature Center Preschoolers Welcome Fall With Annual Countdown



Imagine a place where children are invited 'please touch', 'smell this', 'can you hear?' Beginning with a single session in 2000, the Nature Center Preschool now has four sessions. Two teachers guide groups of twelve children with caring and warmth as they explore and enjoy the many wonders of the natural world.

Using seasonal themes, daily activities include a hike, discussion circle, crafts, story time, and a snack. During a recent prairie unit, the children walked through the tall grass, investigated a small area of prairie up close to discover what was living there, spent some quiet time enjoying the sights and sounds all around, learned about prairie plants, insects, birds, and mammals, read My First Little House Books: Prairie Day adapted from the Little House Books by Laura Ingalls Wilder and played some of the games mentioned there, role played the Ingalls family activities within a sod house outline, made cottonwood leaf tepees, created squares from recycled wallpaper to make a Nature Center Preschool quilt, and had johnnycakes and molasses for snack. Monthly puppet shows develop themes and allow the children to enter imaginary worlds.

The Nature Center has prairies, woodlands, wetlands, ponds and a stream to investigate, a variety of live animals to observe, and a wide range of hands-on resources such as skulls, pelts, mounts, and fossils to touch, so children receive rich and memorable learning experiences about local ecosystems. The free exploration area being developed at the center gives children a chance to dig and build structures with natural materials.

Favorite activities have been exploring Haines Branch Creek, searching for fossils in a constructed 'dig', dissecting owl pellets, exploring life in a rotting log, studying scat and tracks,

seasonal visits to a favorite cottonwood tree, studying the natural symbols of Nebraska, watching a butterfly emerge and releasing it, and watching the release of a recovered raptor.

A large portion of each day is spent outdoors in almost any weather. These regular experiences of the beauty and diversity of the natural world lead to important lessons in environmental stewardship that will last a lifetime.

Parents support the program in numerous ways and join children during annual events such as a hayrack ride in Pioneers Park, planting the preschool butterfly garden and seasonal celebrations. Preschool graduates regularly return to visit a place that has become very special to them and their families.

The Nature Center Preschool was one of the first programs in this region to emphasize the importance of the natural world in early childhood education. It is dedicated to nurturing a sense of wonder, developing an appreciation of nature, cultivating conceptual understanding, integrating language, math and the arts, providing daily exercise, and fostering small motor skill development.

Children three to five years old are enrolled for the school year. Tuesday/Thursday and Wednesday/Friday, morning and afternoon sessions are available. Registrations open March 1st for 2006-07. Visits to the preschool are welcomed. SEE PAGE 33 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

ADULTS

Sandhill Crane Trip

Enjoy the magnificent spring spectacle of the sandhill crane migration. The trip will include videos on the bus, stops at ponds and fields to view cranes and waterfowl, and sunset at the Fort Kearney Bridge watching the cranes coming to the river for the night. Participants should bring their own picnic supper. Call the Nature Center for more information.

Deadline: 2/17 12:30-9:30 pm 3/20 Mon \$40/person Meet at Auld Rec. Center



Basic Bird Identification

Learn to identify area birds during the exciting spring migration period. Evening sessions cover field guides, binoculars and scopes, tips on identifying birds, habitat and migration, publications, and organizations. Saturday morning fieldtrips visit local birding hotspots (participants will carpool).

Co-sponsored by Wachiska Audubon Society.

4/4, 4/11, 4/18 & 4/25 Tire 4/8, 4/15, 4/22 & 4/29 Sat

Deadline: 4/1 7-9 pm Prairie Bldg. 8-10 am (fieldtrips)

SCOUTS

Free Hikes

One hour naturalist-led hikes offered for scouts Saturday mornings at 10 am. Call to register at least two weeks in advance. First-come, first-served.

Badgework

Nature Center programming will help your group complete a badge in one morning or afternoon. Program will rotate.

Eco-Explorer Try-It for Brownie Scouts

Habitat is where your home is. Explore Nature Center habitats and create one for little critters. Nature Center staff will help you complete activities #1, 3, 4, and 5.

Deadline: 3/22 3/25 Sat 9:30-11:30 am \$6/scout; leaders free Chet Ager Bldg.

Your Outdoor Surroundings Badge

Explore the fun you can have in the outdoors. Nature Center staff will help you complete activities #4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Ages: Jr. Girl Scouts Deadline: 4/26 4/29 9:30-Noon \$6/scout; leaders free Prairie Bldg.

Naturalist Activity Badge

area, investigate bird flyways and more! Nature Center staff will help you complete activities #3, 5, 6, and 8.

5/6 Sat 1:00-3:30 pm Prairie Bldg. \$6/scout; leaders free

A Nature



Investigate a different nature crime scene every day! See Ad on Page 30

Learn to identify the poisonous plants and animals of our

Ages: Webelos Deadline: 5/3

\$40/person/8 sessions

Nature Center Preschool

Where Kids Explore

September 2006 - May 2007

Enrollment begins March 1 Tuesday/Thursday Sessions or Wednesday/Friday Sessions Morning Sessions: 9:00 - 11:30 am Afternoon Sessions: 12:30-2:30 pm Call 441-7895 for a brochure.

See Page 3 for more information.





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